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SUBJECT: EVAL OF OLD HEAD MSNS (FWD VS AFT QUALITY)

REF: 4302

1. REFERENCED MESSAGE REQUESTS SPECIFIC QUALITY DIFFERENCES RELATIVE TO FWD AND AFT PHOTOGRAPHY OF OLD HEAD MATERIAL. EVALUATIONS OF THIS MATERIAL ARE FOR THE MOST PART SUBJECTIVE IN NATURE UNLESS SPECIFIC PROBLEMS ARE EXPERIENCED. IN ADDITION, RESOLUTION TESTS ARE NOT PHOTOGRAPHED AND THEREFORE RESOLUTION VALUES ARE UNAVAILABLE. IN VIEW OF THESE CONSIDERATIONS, THE FOLLOWING GENERALIZATION ARE OFFERED.

A. MOST (APPROX 90 PCT) OLD HEAD MSNS EXHIBIT A QUALITY DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE FWD AND AFT POSITIONS. THE IMAGERY OF THE FWD FRAMES IS USUALLY OF GOOD QUALITY, WHILE THE IMAGERY OF THE AFT FRAMES IS DEGRADED BY WHAT APPEARS AS AN OUT OF FOCUS CONDITION. NUMEROUS DISCUSSIONS WITH BOTH CONTRACTUAL AND CUSTOMER REPS HAVE INDICATED THIS CONDITION CAUSED BY THERMAL GRADIENTS ACROSS THE LENS AND /OR ACROSS THE Q-DAY WINDOWS.

B. IN GENERAL THESE QUALITY DIFFERENCES ARE SUBTLE AND CAN ONLY BE DETECTED AT MAGNIFICATIONS OF 25X OR ABOVE. HOWEVER ON OCCASION, THESE DIFFERENCES ARE QUITE APPARENT, SUCH THAT THE INSIGNIA ON AIRCRAFT WINGS CAN BE READ FROM THE FWD FRAMES BUT NOT FROM THE AFT.

C. NO SIGNIFICANT FEATURES ACCOMPANY THIS DIFFERENCE.

D. NO TRENDS RELATIVE TO TIME OF DAY, TIME OF YEAR, EXPOSURE, ETC., HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED.

3. ALL OLD HEAD PHOTOGRAPHY IS ACQUIRED AT THE SAME GENERAL ALTITUDE: THEREFORE, A QUALITY VS ALTITUDE COMPARISON CANNOT BE ACCOMPLISHED.

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